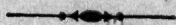


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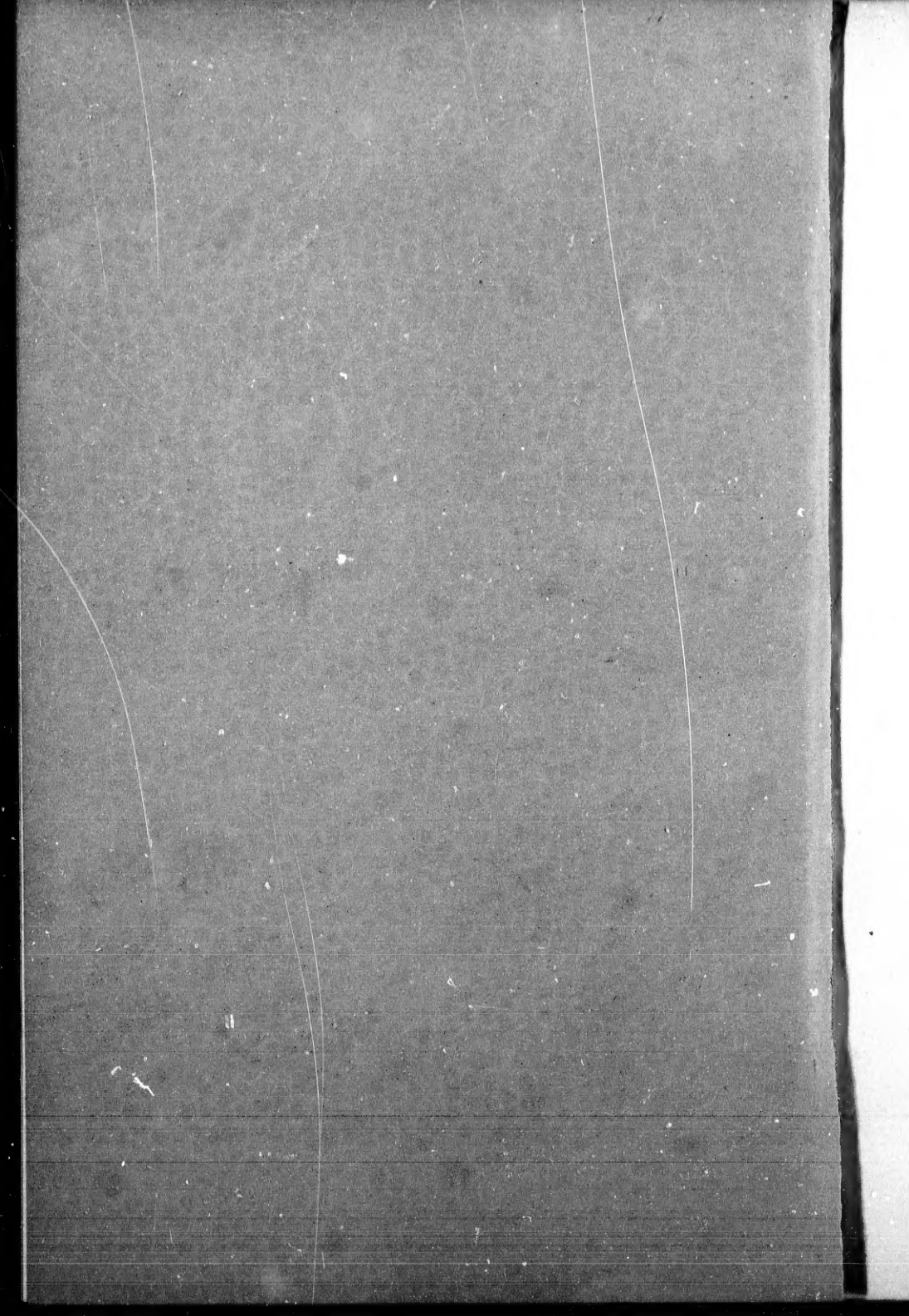


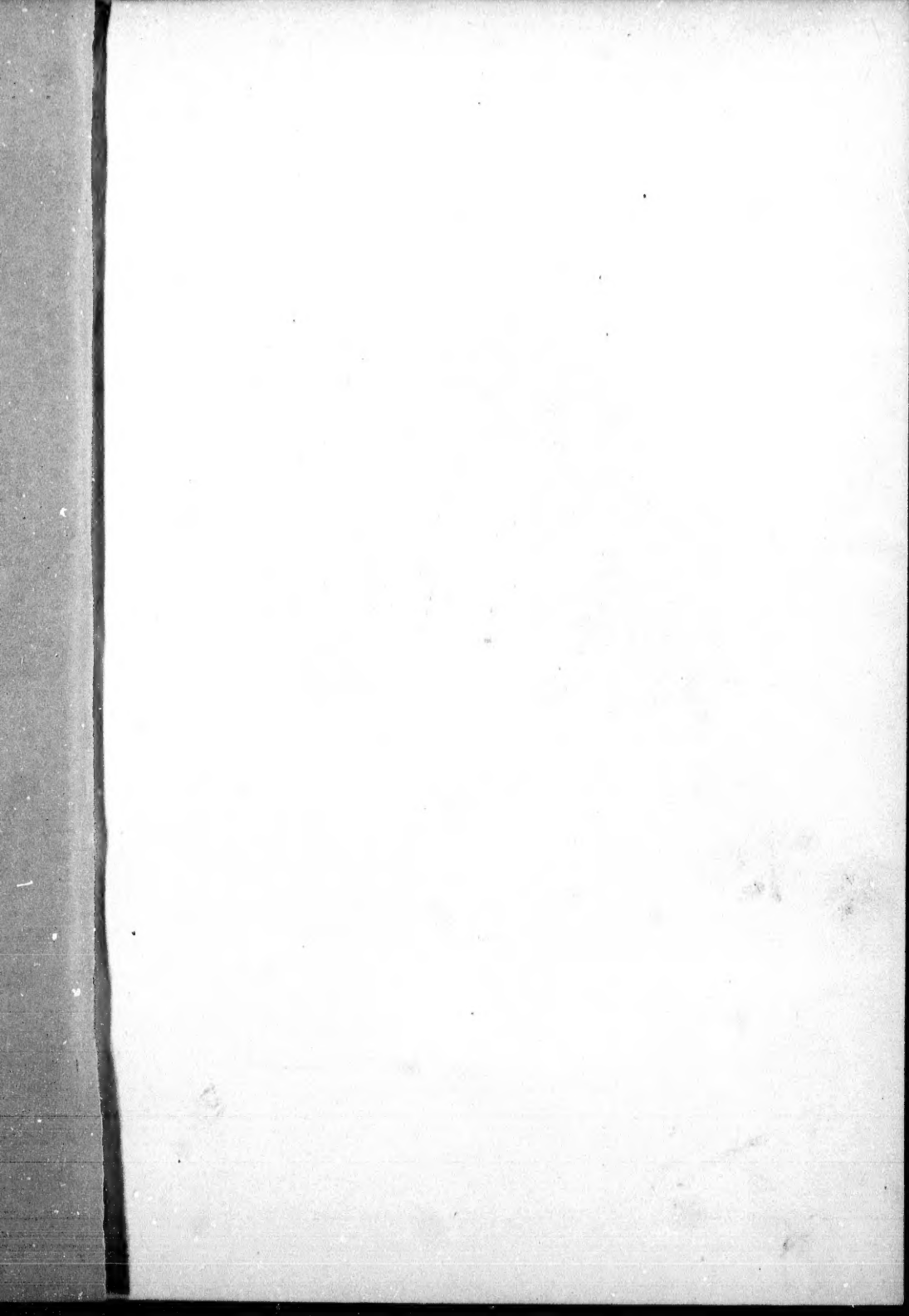
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Old Fort Schuyler in History.



1759--1883.







Peter Schuyler

ORATION

AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE SITE

OF THE

Fort Schuyler Monument,

(UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ONEIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.)

JULY 4th, 1883.

BY

ISAAC S. HARTLEY, D. D.

UTICA, N. Y.

WILLIAM H. BOWEN & CO., PRINTERS, 60 GENESSEE STREET.

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FORT SCHUYLER IN HISTORY.

BY REV. DR. ISAAC S. HARTLEY.

Mr. President, Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

Beneath these genial skies and amid an atmosphere fairly laden with the music of freedom and joy, and on a day when as a people we took our place among the distinct nationalities of the world, we have here assembled to mark a spot pre-eminently historic to us, the citizens of this emerald c...

There have been periods in our history when, laying aside our usual avocations, we have been called together to consider questions bearing upon our national polity and life. And there have been seasons when, awakened by the din of war and the clash of arms, we have convened to arouse, enlist and equip brave hearts and strong arms for the conflict. But at this hour, though drums beat, bugles sound, flags wave and the measured tread of soldiers in martial array is heard in our midst, we have come to rescue from threatened oblivion the humble site, around which more than a century ago our fathers gathered, and from whence they sallied forth to glorious victory.

America, rich in fertile valleys and noble streams, has none, however, more historic than those which these wooded hills garrison, and where flow yon rapid rippling waters. The great Roman orator tells us that, when he was at Athens, he could scarcely move without meeting some record commemorative of illustrious deeds or of illustrious men. The thundering eloquence of Demosthenes and the divine ethics of Plato were floating in the air. So here; every field, every forest, every acre and yon waters suggest memories dear to every freeman's heart, and such as all true Americans should delight ever to recall.

From the time in which it was known that this beautiful valley led to the great lakes and the extensive prairies of the west, it has been the avenue along which the most valiant forces have moved, as well as the scene for struggles bitter, persistent and sanguinary. True, those of the whites who were the first to thread it from the east were our own Dutch forefathers, and like their fathers were in quest of the trade which made them the most successful mer-

chants in the world; while those who passed in from the west were the missionaries of the cross, who, as they followed its grassy level, held high in air the symbol of their faith. But though the cross and commerce so early entered its verdant gates, only a few years passed ere it witnessed scenes, than which the pages of history nowhere record any more terrible or severe. Here it was where the Five Nations made their home, whose Tekawhoge, or war captain, was always of the Mohawks. First, these confederate tribes were in league for the preservation of their own cabins and hunting grounds. Later, when strengthened by the addition of the Tuscaroras they formed an alliance with the Dutch. Still later, they became wedded to the English; later still, they were friends of the white man of every nationality.

For more than a century the grand problem that was ever presenting itself to the more aggressive nations of Europe was, shall the vast area of the Iroquois become a dependence; or shall the red man retain his native fields and remain the sole monarch of the western world? The attempts to solve this far-reaching problem have made this valley most historic, and gave to its early people the name of "The Romans of America," while it led the Spartans of classic Greece to be called "The Mohawks of the Old World."

It does not comport with the exercises of the hour that I should sketch, even rudely, the events of which the acreage about us is so suggestive, and which these hills once looked down upon in silent awe. Yet, who in this assembly that knows where he stands can fail to recall the associations so surely connected with the spot, aside from the fact that works were here erected for safety and defense. Over the very area whereon we are now gathered lay the only frequented road through this part of the valley. Some two centuries ago could we have looked down upon this very locality, as did the eagle from his secluded nest, we might have seen Father Ioques with his associate brethren in quest of the wigwams of the Mohawks, to acquaint their dusky tenants with the story of the cross; and a little later, missionaries from our own Dutch church at Albany desiring an acquaintance with the western tribes contemplating their mental and spiritual improvement. Indeed, anterior to this, an Indian delegation went eastward asking from their Albanian friends to be taught anew the Christian truths, that by dying in the Christian faith, they might obtain the Christian reward. We might have seen likewise the brave chiefs of the Iroquois as they journeyed—now for a national council—

now to carry to their captors new tokens of their fidelity and allegiance. In truth, no warrior, no soldier, in war or in peace, no itinerant, no discoverer, nor army of any nationality could move to the right or left without passing the field about us, and thus the site we would this day perpetuate. It was the natural and traditional path. The original trail from the brambles and bushes of the Mohawk here terminated, and also the trail which led from the higher grounds and the thicker forests at the west.

Referring to the topographical features of our immediate neighborhood, in early days, two trails or paths lay on either side of the river; one leading to Fort William at the west, the other to a route by the wooded banks of the Black River and thence to Canada. Along this latter trail the French traveled in their overland incursions aimed at the expulsion of the settlers on our northwestern frontiers. As it branched off some ten miles or so to the northwest towards Fort William, it made a more circuitous route to this part of our State than the trail on the south side of the river; of which our own Genesee street, with its numerous stores and palatial houses is merely the development. A few rods to the east of us a little rivulet flowed, and it still flows bearing the present name of Ballou creek; or, as it was called by our Dutch fathers, *Schwein Fresser Kill*, making its outlet in yonder curve in the broader current of the Mohawk; while a hundred or more feet to the west, on the north bank of the river, Reels creek emptied its babbling waters. Insignificant tributaries to the Mohawk! True, but in their day though secondary streams they had a historic import quite equivalent to the early Tiber, or to the more pellucid current of the Tagus. If the waters of the Adonis were esteemed sacred by the Asiatics, and the Phrygians rendered honors to the Marsyas and the Meander, and the conquering Greek, previous to his ruffling the surface of the Sinde, poured libations into it from golden goblets, every lover of freedom should hold most dear yon streams for the services they have rendered to American growth and to American glory. The meeting of these two humble rivulets, coming down from the cooling springs born in yonder hills, laden with sand and gravel, and entering the river nearly opposite each other, made the Mohawk fordable; and I need hardly say it was the fordableness of the river that constituted the place where we are now assembled the highway of this valley. On the angle of land formed by the south bank of the river, and the west shore of Schwein Fresser Kill the Fort was located, whose site we this day would mark. Consequently it guarded not merely the river itself,

which when in repose reflects the evening star and the blush of morn, but the tortuous travel east and west that led to it. Its site then was most wisely chosen. Its position made it one of the gates of this valley, nor could a friend or enemy pass seeking the east by the Mohawk, or the west by the double trail without paying to it, if demanded, proper tribute.

Remembering, then, where we now stand, how numerous must have been the scenes to which this site has been witness! But when I speak of the scenes with which this place is so surely connected, I have not in mind so much those in which loving peace is so often eloquent, and upon which orators and poets always delight to lavish, and appropriately, their loftiest praises, when

Buried was the bloody hatchet—
Buried was the dreadful war club—
Buried were all war-like weapons,
And the war cry was forgotten—

rather am I thinking of what Avon's bard so truthfully described as

"That son of hell
Whom angry heavens do make their minister,"

of war, savagery, slaughter, rapine, and all that kindred terms so naturally suggest. It is said that a single mound remains, with here and there a ditch, to mark the ancient site of the old city of Verulam. But connect these debris of her former greatness with her history, and the mind instantly becomes moved, and deeply. Once she enjoyed all the rights of Roman citizenship. Here the brave Queen Boadicea defended the Roman army. Here St. Alban received his martyrdom. Here, also Britain knew British, Roman, Saxon, Danish, Saxon and Norman dynasties. So when I pause to recall where we are now met, scene after scene passes before me just as great and changing. Indeed, in imagination, I can see the moving to and fro of Indian scout, fired with revenge, learning when and where his inflamed passions shall next be given their sway. I can see the fleeing of bleeding, decimated and homeless families hurrying hither and thither, crimsoning their way with blood, seeking that protection which civilization and only civilization can give and perpetuate. I can see cruel hordes advancing from yonder marshes to scalp, to wound, to kill; and the marching of Saxon forces to check, to conquer and to tame. Nor is it difficult to recall the alternate moving and retreating of Indians, French, Dutch, English, flushed with the hope of speedy victory,

or disheartened and crushed by sudden defeat. For the Caucasian knew this spot, as did the lowly and cruel red man. No doubt it has been the passive observer of many a skirmish, and, it may be, bitter struggle. And as at yonder ford the weaker rested to bathe, so the stronger availed themselves of the pebbled path and hurrying over, sought victory beyond.

Omitting the earlier scenes with which this part of our lovely valley is fairly burdened, let me ask; was it not through the very fields whereon we stand that the sachems so often passed for their peculiar talks to the ancient place of treaties—Albany; that the adventurous Bradstreet crossed with his armament for Oswego; and when its Fort was completed that the motely brigades of Mercer, Schuyler and others marched to occupy and defend it; and that the relief corps of Webb so sluggishly journeyed? Indeed scarce had the rude posts of the stockade settled in their holes ere Prideaux and Johnson reached yon ford with the confederate troops of New England and New Jersey on their way to Niagara; breaking camp at Canajoharie on the 19th, and journeying by this site on the 30th of June. The same was true of other commanders, and other forces bent on kindred missions. As the tides rise and fall, or flood and ebb, so have valorous hosts moved to and fro before this place—now to defeat—now to victory—now to victory—now to defeat. In yonder meadow the gallant Herkimer bivouacked after his glorious victory at Oriskany—that royal struggle which turned the current of the Revolution and ended in our national birth. Beyond a doubt the first water that cooled and cleansed his mortal wound was dipped up from yonder daisied bank. The wily St. Leger also would have rested here had not the brave German assured him, by bullet messages, that the longest way round was the shortest way home. Here Arnold halted in seeking the relief of Fort Stanwix.

Numerous, very numerous, are the associations of this place; nor is there an area in all central New York abounding in memories of men more noble, in events more decisive, or in scenes more thrilling and important.

Referring, as I now am, to some of the events that have made this section of our valley so historic, may I add; few have ever estimated the strategic importance of central New York, and the bearing its topography has exerted upon our national destiny. In the line of hills a little to the south of us, no less than three streams have their rise, which with our own gently flowing Mohawk and the Hudson command nearly one-half the eastern area

of these United States; and by following the course of our streams and valleys we can invade no less than twenty States and two-thirds of the territories of the union. Streams form a nation's natural defense and are her proper highways; so have believed the mighty conquerors of the past, and much later the confederates in our recent war. In no mean sense then, New York State commands the union. Nor can there be but one government on this continent so long as our rivers, valleys and mountains remain as now. The honored President of this society, Horatio Seymour, the sage of Deerfield

Qui decori decus addit avio,

assures us that, in company with General Winfield Scott, from an elevated point near the confluence of the Mohawk and the Hudson rivers, he overlooked the range of highlands which marked their courses; and that the hero of so many battles, stretching out his arm, remarked: "Remember this has been the strategic point in all the wars waged for the control of this continent." And this is simply one of the highlands of our State. Add to it those of which I have just spoken, those wooded summits which the sun first doth gild, and from them we can pass down not merely to our seaboard cities, but to the vast, vast acres which make our reunited and prosperous country.

The Fort that formerly occupied this site was built in 1759; more than forty years after the erection of Forts Ticonderoga and Onondaga, and some forty-seven years after Fort Hunter, the latter being the first Fort erected among the Five Nations. It was merely one in a long chain of similar structures that united the waters of the Hudson with the deeper and bluer waters of our western lakes. On the west, the nearer were Forts Bull and William, with Forts Herkimer and Hendricks at the east. It had its origin in the colonies desiring to strengthen themselves in this valley, and the necessity of supplies and ammunition being conveniently located, as well as shelter for the settlers when threatened or pursued by thirsty and bloody foes.

Under date of July 16, 1755, the lords of trade wrote to Governor Hardy for an opinion as to the best system to be laid down for the defense of the frontiers; for the management of the Indians; what Forts should be built, where located, and the number of troops required to give efficiency to the colonies. Hardy, in replying to this communication, suggested that three Forts should be erected on the northern frontiers; one on the Hudson

river; another at Lake George; a third at or about where Wood creek and South Bay mix their waters; another in the Onondaga country where the general councils of the Six Nations were held; and still another some eighty miles to the west of Oswego. They were not, however, to be equal in extent, nor of the same magnitude. On the contrary, he expressly mentions that some, as Fort Onondaga, need not be very strong, as a picketed one with a number of block-houses would be sufficient. The recommendations of the governor were adopted. So soon, therefore, as authority arrived for their erection they were begun. As General Shirley at this time was in command of the north and western frontier, he undertook the construction of the more needed ones, leaving the less important to be built after the completion of those demanded for strategic purposes. To his honor and magnanimity be it said, not one was located arbitrarily. On the other hand, he not only sought the permission of the Indians, but solicited also their active co-operation. Notably was this true of the Fort built at Oneida. Ere, however, the plans of the government could be carried out, Shirley was superseded by the Earl of Loudon; it was, therefore, under his administration that this particular Fort was built, and from whom also it received, so to say, its charge. Before the Indians yielded their assent to the multiplication of defenses among them, inasmuch as they were desired for the present emergency, and their erection somewhat interfered with their fishing and hunting places, and they who garrisoned them too frequently abused their privilege, it was expressly stipulated that all minor posts should be destroyed, so soon as the war ended.

The size and shape of Fort Schuyler I have yet to learn, as well as the special character of its construction. As Fort Stanwix at Rome was erected the year previous, and at an expense of nearly three hundred thousand dollars, and upon the most true and approved scientific principles of military engineering, it is not probable that the Fort on whose site we are now met was either as costly or extensive. Rather, since the completion of Fort Stanwix gave abundant accommodations for a large garrison, and afforded complete shelter for supplies and fugitives, it is more than probable that it was a simple block-house, with openings for cannon and musket, and palisaded so as to furnish proper protection to all needing it for safety or aggressive warfare. I thus speak, for such was the character of the Forts to the east which occupied similar subordinate positions. In Barber's collection of New York, we are told that the "first building erected within the limits of

Utica was a mud fort, during the old French war. It was situated between Main street and the bank of the river a little eastward of Second street." When Fort Schuyler had accomplished its mission, or the war over, the authorities kept the promise made to the allies, and with other constructions of like character, it was given over to decay.

Following the custom of the day the Fort was named for an officer, at this very period in the active service of his country, Colonel Peter Schuyler, of New Jersey. Already had the noble deeds of Peter Schuyler, of Albany, become household words; but as the dash, bravery, heroism and philanthropy of his namesake were daily coming more and more into view, and were commanding the astonishment and admiration of his countrymen, it received his name, simply as a feeble acknowledgment of the services he had already rendered the government, as well as a reminder for further faithfulness, devotion and sacrifice.

That the Fort was called for the Jersey and not for the Albanian Schuyler, we need but recall the custom that prevailed at this day in naming every stockade or defense for an officer then in active service. Unhappily when its foundations were laid Peter Schuyler, of Albany, had been in his grave twenty-five years, while his namesake of New Jersey was in command of the Jersey Blues then garrisoning Oswego. Nor among all the officers in the army was there one more popular, self-sacrificing, or the recipient of higher honors. When others were timid and doubtful, he was bold; when they parleyed and delayed, he was nervous and anxious for action; when the State was unable to pay its troops, he advanced moneys for the same from his private resources; and more especially, when the general government could not and did not ransom her soldiers from captivity, Peter Schuyler, of New Jersey, became their deliverer by personally purchasing their redemption, and with no hope of return. Indeed his bravery, patriotism and philanthropy endeared him to the whole country. It is likewise the testimony and tradition of his descendants still living in New Jersey, that it was their ancestor for whom this Fort was called; and at this very hour their choicest heirloom consists of the sword once worn by their noble sire during his campaigns in our valley, when the old block-house first came into being. While Peter Schuyler, of Albany, had frequently given his services to his country, and enjoyed a most enviable reputation among the Indians, he was, however, more a man of peace; in fact, he was offered the honor of knighthood for his civic services. Peter Schuyler, of

New Jersey, was a man of war, and for his military dash and sagacity received the commendation of the English parliament, through William Pitt; while the colonies manifested their gratitude for his great philanthropy by frequently rendering him unwonted honors.

As in studying the early history of this section of our State, we frequently meet with the names Fort Schuyler and Old Fort Schuyler, may I observe in passing, that during the Revolutionary war an attempt was made to give the name of Schuyler to the Fort erected on or near the site of Fort Stanwix, at Rome; while the Fort which we this day would commemorate was alluded to as Old Fort Schuyler. But as these two Forts derived their names from two different individuals of the same distinguished family, so did they occupy different sites. To repeat, our Fort Schuyler derived its name from Colonel Peter Schuyler, of New Jersey, and of Indian renown; while the Fort which supplanted Fort Stanwix was called after General Philip Schuyler, of New York, and of Revolutionary memory.

Here an imperfect sketch of the Schuyler family will not be out of place.

The family of Schuyler has always played a most important part in the history of our commonwealth. The first who appears on the historical page was Philip Pietersen Schuyler, a pure Hollander, who came to these western shores in 1650. His ancestral acres lay about the famous old city of Dordrecht. After an honored career, he died on the 9th of May, 1683, O. S. and was buried in the old Dutch church at Albany. His fourth child bore his father's name, nor was he any the less distinguished. He was born at the city of Albany, and after its incorporation became its first mayor, occupying this position from 1686 to 1694. In 1688 he received the commission of major of the militia, and before the close of the year was given command of the Fort in his native city. He was also made a member and, at a later period, became the president of his majesty's council for the province of New York; and for a while acting governor of the colony. He was chief commissioner for Indian affairs, and held that arduous and responsible position many years. To impress the government of Queen Anne with the character of its allies, in 1710 he visited England, taking with him several Iroquois chiefs with whose constituency he was on terms of intimacy. As a token of her respect for the services he had rendered the government, Queen Anne presented him on his return with a silver vase. This was the Schuyler whom the Indians loved to call "Brother Queder." He died in 1724.

The ninth child of Philip Pietersen Schuyler was John, whose son John was the honored father of General Philip Schuyler, the trusted and tried friend of America, and who fought so bravely for her independence. He was baptized, as was his friend Benjamin Franklin, on the day of his birth.

The sixth child of Philip Pietersen was Arent Schuyler, who was born in the city of Albany in 1662. He was given the name of his maternal grandfather. He married Jenneke Teller, November 26th, 1684, and commenced house-keeping on North Pearl street, Albany, as the records read, "in the house where the eagle hangs out." The notarial papers inform us that as his name Arent meant eagle, he hung out in a cage a live eagle, to mark his residence, instead of a door plate. About the year 1693, he removed to New York city. In an Indian deed dated July 13th, 1696, he is styled, "Merchant of the city of New York." Having purchased, however, an extensive tract of land in New Jersey, near Pompton, he removed there perhaps in 1706, and ever afterwards regarded this State as his home. In April, 1710, he purchased an additional farm on New Barbadoes Neck, the present site of Belleville, to which he removed the same year.

As an illustration of the surprises that await the more bold and adventurous, let me relate an incident which, as we shall see, gave him no mean wealth, as well as social influence, in his adopted State. As one of his negroes was plowing, he happened to turn up a greenish heavy stone, which he took to his master, who, discovering that it contained copper, sent it to England for analysis. It was found to possess eighty per cent of this valued metal. Desiring to reward the faithful and thoughtful slave, Schuyler asked him to name three things that he desired most, assuring him that his wishes would be gravely considered. The slave answered first, that he might remain with his master as long as he lived; second, that he might have all the tobacco he could smoke; and third, that he might have a dressing-gown like his master's, with big brass buttons. Schuyler suggested he should ask for something more. After a moment's thought, the negro replied "that he might have a little more tobacco." How true that were the loftiest ambition of some fully gratified, it would end in smoke!

The family of Arent Schuyler consisted of his sons Philip, Casperus, John, Peter, Adoniah, and his daughters Eve and Cornelia. His third son William died in infancy. Peter, his fifth son, the noble man whom we this day would honor, was born on his father's farm in 1710; whether the one at Pompton or Belle-

ville it is difficult to say. Of his early days little is known beyond his receiving a liberal education, and such as qualified him for future usefulness.

His father dying in 1730, and leaving him by his will some seven hundred and sixty acres of land near the Rahway river, on the site of the present city of Elizabeth, led him to make New Jersey his home. He married Mary, daughter of John Walter, of New York, a man of considerable influence and great wealth, who lived at this period in Hanover square in the same city. It appears he had but one child, a daughter named Catharine; to whom, as his will reads, he bequeaths all the residue of his estate, and her heirs and assigns for ever.

But rather than occupy ourselves with the biography of Colonel Schuyler, since he was quite a prominent figure in the struggle in which the colonists were now engaged, let me, though necessarily very imperfectly, review the condition of the country at this time, and as we unfold it, mark the man.

From the hour in which the French had obtained a foot hold on American soil, and had become acquainted with its general character, they coveted to make it a dependency of the French crown. For the accomplishment of this purpose, every known expedient was resorted to from actual purchase, to forcible expulsion. To add efficiency to their design, a chain of Forts was begun to extend from Canada to the mouth of the Mississippi; while later they were planted westward as far as the present city of Detroit; thus literally to hem in the colonists, and when the proper hour arrived to take possession of the country. The formal declaration of war, by the powers in Europe in 1744, added to the growing hatred of the contending parties; and laid open our frontier State wider to all the horrors with which they had become already too familiar. Indeed, the atrocities of the French rapidly assumed such proportions, that the province became most clearly impressed with the conviction that their only permanent safety lay in the conquest of Canada, and in making it a tribute to the English realm. With this in view, Governor Shirley, of Massachusetts, proposed at once the capturing of Louisburg, and particularly it, since all conceded this settlement to be the key to the French occupation. At the same time aid was dispatched to Oswego, the many frontier Forts were strengthened, and measures entered upon to engage the Iroquois in the war now upon the nation. While the colonists were thus paying their attention to the invaders at Cape Breton, all the country, especially that

portion along our northern frontier, was kept in perpetual disturbance, by the actions of the French and their tawny allies.

But to attempt any history of the atrocities of the French at this time, along the frontiers of our State, would be merely a recapitulation of the massacre at Schenectady in 1690, and the still later barbarities of Wyoming and Cherry Valleys. As they were of an uncalled for character they awoke a spirit of determined resistance among the colonies, and spurred them to vigilance and action. Among other results they drew Colonel Peter Schuyler from his Jersey acres, and led him to offer his services to the country. This was in 1746. The records of the acts of the New Jersey legislature for this year contain the following: "For colonel of the forces raised in this province for the intended expedition, it is unanimously recommended his honor, Peter Schuyler, Esq., a gentleman well-known to several members of this board, of good estate and reputation, and very proper to be commissioned for the purpose." Having accepted this high and responsible position, our hero was immediately ordered to proceed to Oswego, to garrison the Fort, and make ready for any service to which he might be summoned. Surrounding himself with the troops he had been able to enlist, on the third of September he embarked at Amboy, en route for Oswego, via the Hudson river and Albany. As the government, however, had failed to furnish the necessary additional force, that was to come from England, Schuyler, after a delay of five months in Albany, was recalled. Though deeply chagrined at the failure of the home government to redeem its promise, and the inefficiency also of those who had the care of colonial affairs, this experience, however, simply brought out some of his more prominent characteristics, and led the authorities to see with whom they were dealing. During his detention at Albany, he informed the New Jersey governor that his men were in want of a surgeon, medicine, shirts, flints, colors, bread and peas. Besides this, unless they soon received their pay, they had threatened to leave; taking with them their arms and ammunition. In Governor Hamilton's reply to their communication, he complimented Colonel Schuyler for the zeal he had shown in his majesty's service; and at the same time gave him assurance that that very day he had ordered for each one of his soldiers a pair of shoes and two speckled shirts. But as the troops felt that this promise of the authorities would be similar to others with which they had become acquainted, Colonel Schuyler, fearing they might desert, advanced from his own private means several

thousand pounds, enough to meet their wants, and to silence all their murmurs. The more important needs of his men having thus been met, Colonel Schuyler was ordered to proceed to Saratoga and await the commands that there would be sent him. Unfortunately, the same experiences that had overtaken him while at Albany were here repeated; and they were met in the same way. In the mean time, articles of peace were signed at Aix la Chapelle, which bringing an end to the war, left Colonel Schuyler nothing to do but to return to New Jersey; where, after a few weeks' delay he found himself engaged once more in his former labors.

Though the war had been officially declared to be at an end, so far, however, as America was concerned, after all nothing really had been gained. On the contrary, the country had greatly suffered, and so had humanity. The boundaries between British and French possessions were yet unsettled; nor had either contestant acknowledged the right of the other to portions of Maine; but more particularly to the basin of the Ohio. With such important questions unadjusted, the opportunities for renewing old hostilities were exceedingly frequent; so much so that even an unprejudiced mind easily discovered them. The following added very much to the accumulating complications. The English government, (under the treaty of Lancaster of 1744) had permitted Virginia to assume the right of territory as far west as the Mississippi. In harmony with this treaty, a large grant of land situated on the Ohio river was given to several individuals of wealth and influence, residing in England and in Virginia. The grantees on taking possession of their property naturally adopted measures for their government and protection. The government in Canada having learned of these proceedings, and regarding them as an intrusion upon French rights, informed the governors of New York and Pennsylvania of the encroachments thus made; and warned them that in case they did not desist, such steps would be taken as the invasion of a domain demanded. His threats receiving no attention, in pursuance of his purpose, the French governor ordered his troops to the town of Picqua, in the valley of the Miami, to demand its surrender with the English traders therein and their effects. The Indians in charge, declaring that the English were their guests, refused; whereupon the French assaulted the town and destroyed the Fort, and to show, it may be, the determination with which they proposed to carry out their measures, the king of the Piankeshaws was sacrificed

and eaten. Thus, in Ohio began anew that flame whose buried fires were once more to illuminate not simply the western frontiers, but the homes and the hearths of all the colonies.

Dinwiddie, the lieutenant governor of Virginia, regarding conduct so unprovoked as tantamount to an invasion, in 1753, dispatched Major George Washington with a letter to the commander of the French forces in the Ohio, demanding that he withdraw from the territory of his majesty, and make due explanation for an act so dastardly and cruel. De St. Pierre then the commander of the Ohio, who received this letter, replied that he had acted from instructions given him by the governor general of Canada; still he would forward to him the communication. While the correspondence was progressing, the French increased the difficulties by fitting out an expedition under Duquesne to occupy the Ohio valley; learning which the Indians determined to resist. Two fleet runners passed down this very valley to the home of Sir William Johnson with belts, soliciting his assistance. At the same time an Indian envoy met the French at Niagara, and warned them back. Nothing daunted, however, they pushed on, till they came to the harbor of Erie, where they were again entreated to return. As the speech of Tamacharisson, the half king, brought a reply from the French commander that proved a hurricane to the flames already smoldering, permit me to reproduce the two in their entirety. "Father," said the Indian, "you are disturbers in this land, by taking it away unknown to us and by force. This is our land, and not yours. Father, both you and the English are white; we live in a country between. Therefore the land belongs to neither the one nor the other of you; but the Great Being above allowed it to be a dwelling place for us; so, father, I desire you to withdraw, as I have done our brothers, the English."

"Child," replied the French officer, "you talk foolishly; you say the land belongs to you; but not so much of it as the black of your nails is yours. It is my land; and I will have it, let who will stand up against it." What arrogance! What assumption! Who can wonder that such words should quicken, inflame and curdle even Indian blood.

The mission of Washington proving as fruitless as the entreaties of the Indians, on his return to Virginia preparations were immediately made to assert the right of the colonists. As soon as possible a regiment was raised, and under the command of Washington moved for the Ohio; but meeting with defeat

nothing was accomplished. Already had the French advanced as far eastward as the present site of Pittsburg; and aided by a strong force under De Contrecoeur possessed themselves of the Fort the Virginians had here erected. It was at this time that the colonists were exhorted to confederacy. Accordingly, on the 19th of June, 1754, a conference of commissioners from every State north of the Potomac met in Albany, to consider a plan which their own needs and the exigency of the hour demanded. It was the opinion of every member of the council, that a union of all the colonies was absolutely required. From this hour the French discovered the English were in earnest; nor were they deceived. The *Santes* having become confederated felt their duties and responsibilities. Concerted measures were therefore prepared, not to check the advance of the French, but to drive them out of the country. Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia immediately voted supplies for the campaign, and many of their valiant sons were soon on the march. The resolves of the colonists quite paralyzed the home government. While, however, it was hesitating, the Duke of Cambridge, early in 1775, sent over General Braddock with a detachment of the army in Ireland, to be used by the colonies as were their needs. One of the first measures adopted by Braddock after his arrival was calling together the several governors, for the double purpose of learning the true condition of affairs, and to agree on some plan for united action. This council convened at Alexandria, in Virginia, April 14, 1755, at which the following four expeditions were agreed upon: The first was to be directed against Fort Duquesne, to be commanded by Braddock in person; the second, to capture Forts Frontenac and Niagara, under General Shirley; the third, to seize Crown Point, under the leadership of General William Johnson; while the last, under Lawrence, the lieutenant governor of Nova Scotia, was to reduce this province, according to the English interpretation of its boundaries.

It was now that the martial and patriotic spirit of Colonel Peter Schuyler became again aroused, and that he puts his sword and life at the control of his country. Since his former campaigns had made him quite familiar with frontier life, he was at once ordered to occupy with his regiment Fort Oswego, which he did, reaching it July 20, 1755. As Braddock, however, had just experienced an inglorious defeat, which exposed the State of New Jersey to the inroads of the French hirelings,

in December of the same year, he was instructed to abandon Oswego, return home and prepare for such contingencies, to which it was thought the recent reverses must lead. During the winter, he occupied a block-house on the banks of the Delaware. In the spring, on his return to the north, he was ordered back to Oswego, which, after many delays, he reached July 1, 1756. On his arrival, learning that Montcalm had determined on the invasion of the province, and that he proposed to begin by the reduction of the Fort at Oswego, Colonel Schuyler prepared himself for the threatened conflict. Meanwhile, the provincials, learning through Indian spies of the proposed attack, instructed General Webb to march with the force at his command to Schuyler's relief. He failed to arrive in time. The Fort was attacked with great earnestness and vigor. When the struggle began, Colonel Schuyler was posted with his men some six hundred yards to the westward of the Fort, in a small, unfinished redoubt, used for keeping cattle; and in the afternoon of the same day was busy in cutting down the bushes near the Fort and making fascines. The next morning, Colonel Mercer, the commander of the garrison, was killed. On learning his death, Lieutenant Colonel Littlehales sent for Colonel Schuyler, and, after a council of war, orders were issued to cease firing and prepare for capitulation. Colonel Schuyler opposed the surrender; but being over-ruled was obliged to yield. It would be difficult to find in all history a more ignominious submission, though it stipulated that the entire garrison should march out with the full honors of war. On razing the Fort, Montcalm immediately returned to Canada, carrying among other prisoners, the brave, uncompromising Colonel Schuyler, the hero of this happy hour.

Though in captivity and in the hands of his enemies, if caring for one's command and mitigating the hard trials of his fellow-countrymen, situated as was he, in providing for their wants, and in aiding the poor Indians who, through this and other disasters to provincial arms, had fallen into French hands, be any indication of loyalty—or true manhood, even in Canada, Colonel Schuyler was none the less active in the interests of his country than when in the field. His military abilities, social position and magnanimity of spirit were soon discovered by the French, and duly acknowledged. Liberties were accorded to him that others had never enjoyed, which he embraced; nor did he ever abuse them. As he loved his country and its flag, so did he love her sons and her wards.

Away from the noise of war and in retirement, he spent his time not in planning new campaigns, nor in devising means for escape; but in visiting, comforting and caring for the unhappy prison soldiers about him, English, American and Indian, who, through the chances of war, had become captives. Fathers and sons, who could ill be spared from their homes, he gladly and promptly ransomed from his private purse; while for the sick he procured unusual attention, knowing no nationality in his ministries of sympathy and love. In fact, during his stay in Canada, he was allowed by the authorities to have a house by himself, whose doors were ever wide open for his countrymen, all of whom were free to visit him; nor were any who sought his kindly counsel or benefactions sent empty away. At this period in his history, he advanced more than twenty thousand livres to secure the release of Indians, personally caring for them until they were able to be returned to their homes. Many provincials received advances in money, far beyond their ability to pay; and when reproved for his liberality, he informed his censors that his silver could not be better bestowed. Noble man! O generous heart! When will others, with far greater means, be moved with similar feelings for our common humanity, and learn this plain lesson, that moneys expended in the interests of those who put their lives at the service of their country, is spent most humanely, most wisely. Let those in our city, whom fortune has favored, give as freely of their accumulations or inheritance as did Colonel Peter Schuyler, for the heroes who have gone forth from the homes about us, and this very hour, not only would many a domestic want be met, but in some one of our streets we should see a monument commemorative of their sacrifice and heroism, as stately, grand and beautiful as any which the sun this day gilds, or which this night the stars silently watch and so gladly look down upon.

In the autumn of 1756, Colonel Schuyler was allowed on parole to leave Montreal and visit the city of New York, bearing a commission from the governor general of Canada to make terms for the exchange of prisoners. He arrived in New York in November; and as his reputation for sympathy, kindness and great philanthropy—all that he had done for the redemption of his captive countrymen had preceded him, he was received with unusual demonstrations of joy. The same evening the city was illuminated, bonfires were kindled on the common, and an elegant entertainment awaited him at the King's Arm Tavern, where the public generally testified their great gratification at his return.

The next day he set out for home. His neighbors and friends welcomed his arrival with cheers and the booming of cannon. On visiting Newark the following day, the roar of cannon again awaited him; the dwellings, also, of the people were illuminated, an honor which they felt pre-eminently due him for his humanity, as well as for his self-sacrifice and devotion to his country's interests. On going to Princeton, similar marks of respect and consideration were bestowed. As he entered that now classic town, the citizens went out to meet and escort him to his stopping place; and as he approached, a young lady advancing, thus addressed him:

Dear to each muse, and to my country dear,
 Welcome once more to breathe thy native air;
 Not half so cheering is the solar ray
 To the harsh region of a winter's day;
 Not half so grateful fanning breezes rise
 When the hot dog-star burns the summer skies;
 Cæsar's shore with acclamation rings,
 And, welcome *Schuyler*, every shepherd sings;
 See for thy brows the laurel is prepared,
 And justly deemed a patriot, thy reward;
 E'en future ages shall enroll thy name
 In sacred annals of immortal fame.

Thus was it whenever he journeyed. The entire State was moved by his presence, and the distinguished in every walk of life strove to do him honor. As many of her private sons could not forget the favors which they had received, no more could the State withhold paying him, on all proper occasions, the honor which his services had so often and nobly won.

But the days of his parole soon passed away. In obedience to his promise, should no exchange be made in his absence, he prepared to return to the city of his captivity. William Pitt, and even the king himself, complimented him for the zeal he had manifested in the service. Still, on the expiration of his parole, neither was able to redeem him. Even his jailer, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, referred to him as "the brave old Peter Schuyler." Leaving, therefore, his home he set out for Montreal, July 1, 1758, arriving there late the same month. Before his departure from New York, General Abercrombie invested him with full powers for such an exchange of prisoners as the interests of the country demanded. To what extent he was able to carry out the commands of his senior officer is not known; but it is known that shortly after his arrival at Montreal he was exchanged for M. De

Noyan, the commandant at Fort Frontenac. Once more then at liberty, he returned home, having been absent nearly six months. But he did not journey thitherward alone; on the contrary, he gathered up such English prisoners as he had been able to exchange, and many also whom he had purchased from their captors with his private funds, paying for the same a very high price. Indeed, it is said on his arriving at Fort Edward, he had in his company no less than eighty-eight men, women and children; among whom was Mrs. Howe of New England, afterwards the heroine of a romance styled, "The Fair Captive." Mr. George W. Schuyler of Ithaca, N. Y., in furnishing me with this interesting incident adds: "while a prisoner Mrs. Howe was sought but not won, by two Canadians, father and son. Her situation was embarrassing, but Colonel Schuyler came to her relief. He secured her from her suitors by buying her of her owner." Unhappily during Colonel Schuyler's captivity the war lost none of its virulence, nor had the nations come to any better understanding of their rights, than if a sword had not been drawn. True, several attempts had been made at invasion, and numerous plans had been proposed for attacking the French and dispossessing them of their lands; but owing to serious disagreements among British and American or provincial officers concerning rank, and the breaking out of small-pox in the army, nothing permanent had been accomplished. The recent advent, however, of William Pitt to the premiership of England gave the colonists new hope, and inspired them with new purposes. On his accession, three expeditions were immediately proposed, one against Louisburg, the second against Crown Point and Ticonderoga, while the third was directed against Fort Duquesne; resulting in the reduction of Louisburg, the occupation of Fort Duquesne, but defeat at Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Though the events of the year did not equal the expectations which had been entertained, from the joy and enthusiasm the change in the English ministry had put into the heart of the colonists, the advantages gained were marked and decisive. The acquisition of the island of Cape Breton opened the way to Quebec and up the St. Lawrence; and the success in the west enabled a stronger force to be brought against Canada. It was, therefore, determined to attempt by an overwhelming force once more the subjugation of Canada; and thus close a war which had been so detrimental to the interests of both nations. Now it is that the brave Colonel Schuyler is called again to the front with his Jersey Blues, and with the combined forces of the provinces advances northward.

In this expedition, he shows the same care for his soldiers, and exhibits the same devotion to his country's welfare as in his former campaigns. But without following the army as it moved for the Canadian lines, it need only be said that, this last invasion resulted in the colonists, under Lord Amherst, finding their way to Montreal; in De Vaudreuil surrendering all Canada; and in our hero, Colonel Peter Schuyler, entering victoriously the city, and seeing the flag of St. George float in glorious triumph on the very gates which but a short time before had kept him in captivity. It need hardly be said that peace soon followed, though the treaty for the same was not signed till November, 1762. On the capitulation of Canada, Colonel Schuyler immediately returned to his home on the banks of the Passaic, where after a brief rest, he died, March 7, 1762, in the fifty-second year of his age; leaving behind him a reputation for loyalty, bravery, benevolence and chivalrous honor, unexcelled by any who had been engaged in the conflict now triumphantly closed.

In person, Colonel Schuyler was tall and hardy, rather rough it may be at first view, yet, after a little acquaintance revealing deep and genuine sincerity. In conversation, he was above all artifice, or the traffic of forms; yet he enjoyed friendship with a true relish, and in all the relations, what he seemed to be, he was. A newspaper of the day concludes its reference to his character in these words: "Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them."

Such, friends and fellow-citizens, is a rapid outline of the man, and of his relation to our country, for whom this old Fort was called; nor could it have received a name more honorable, or one that could awaken throughout the entire country more real, genuine love and enthusiasm. It may have been, some officer gave it this name because Colonel Schuyler had ransomed him, and thus returned him to his home. Be this, however, as it may, it was the tribute of the province to a bold, brave, determined, kind and faithful soldier and citizen. I greatly rejoice that our loved city has blended with its origin a name so noble and so historic, and one so free from stain and reproach, that other generations, as well as our own, will delight to respect and invest it with that accumulating glory which at all periods is so fully its due.

I have dwelt too long upon the events with which Colonel Schuyler was associated to think of commenting upon the suggestiveness of the exercises in which we are now engaged. There come to me thoughts upon which I should love to dwell, and that

never can be too frequently alluded to, or too plainly expressed. My friends, we but too feebly estimate the struggle in which many of our honored sires were engaged, the price, the fearful price, that has been paid for our country's liberties, and the great courage, devotion and sacrifice they represent. A nation knows nothing of abiding peace till nerve, muscle, heart, soul, all we hold most dear, have been taxed to their utmost, and its altars have been made crimson with blood. Under a benignant and overruling providence, the peace and prosperity we this day enjoy come from the zeal, faith, courage, consecration and suffering of those who have gone before. In this world, beautiful as it is, peaceful acres represent the price of blood. Would to God that we might remember this truth, not for vain glory but to honor such as we this day recall, to thank, to reward, to perpetuate. I trust that the time has forever passed when the tread of marshalled men shall again shake this continent, and this beautiful valley shall again resound with the notes of war, either for aggression or defense. Our inheritance to-day is peace. Being therefore peace, our only ambition should be to keep it, guard it most jealously and sacredly; to be known and remembered for the multitude of our virtues, and for the noble aspirations of sanctified and cultivated genius. And the more so, since to attain this no city need be sacked, no fields devastated, nor blood shed, not even a tear fall. Next to suffering and dying for freedom, is the noble duty to preserve it. The old Jewish rabbi was right when he said that, were the sea ink and the land parchment, the former could not be able to describe, nor the latter to comprise all the praise of liberty. Liberty is the mother of every virtue and the best nurse of genius. The immortal Burke, in one of his impassioned sentences, asks, what is liberty without wisdom and without virtue? We answer it is nothing. It is a vessel without a rudder, a charter without a seal. Virtuous liberty should be our aim, as it has been the desire of all who have coveted its wealth, and who have sought its establishment. Every country that submits to be a land of slaves, deserves to be a land of ruin. An Italian poet once signalized his love of imperial Rome in these noble words: "Eternal gods! may that day be the last on which I forget the happiness of Rome." So should we think, and so should we say. He who is unwilling to imperil his life, if need be, at the summons of holy freedom, does not merit life. He who sincerely loves his country leaves the fragrance of a good name to many ages. But I can not say what I would. I close, then, by remarking that it

is written of Cicero, when he arrived at Athens, he desired to be immediately led to the tomb of Archimedes, no doubt to abandon himself to the inspirations which such a classic spot would so naturally excite. Let me say, however, at this hour, to all such as desire to lend themselves to the higher inspirations of valor, courage, faithfulness, zeal, philanthropy and all that goes to make up the honored citizen, the noble patriot, the brave soldier, the modest and unassuming philanthropist, come and visit this triangular site; and as you walk about its grassy sides, and gaze upon these warlike trophies that are to mark it, remember, it is thus that a grateful people would hallow the memory of their tried servants; and especially, that this city would forever embalm in her purest affections and patriotic memories the name of Colonel Peter Schuyler; he for whom its first structure was called, and which had it received his good old Dutch name would have stirred the proudest remembrances in every loyal heart, and such, in truth, as no African city, though rich in narrative and radiant with classic fame and glory, could possibly awaken.

One more period and I shall have finished. As a most fitting sequel to my remarks, and to commemorate also this happy occasion, there will now be flung to the breeze the first flag, bearing on a swan white field the original State arms, as reconstructed under the laws of 1882, and now the adopted insignia and banner of our noble commonwealth. As it rises up yonder staff, and unfolds itself to be caught and waved and kissed again and again by the passing wind, let it receive with its suggestive emblems, that joyful salutation from you and from me also, which its first appearance in our midst, and among the broad acres in our State, so properly merits.

Hail imperial Banner! speed thy virgin way,
Utica first doth greet thee—this thy bridal day.

The benediction was pronounced by Rev. J. J. Emmegabowh, an Ojibway Indian missionary, in his native tongue.

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